

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of authorizing electronic processing of a corporate check received at a merchant location, the method comprising:

receiving an electronic information about a check from a subscribing merchant;

determining whether the electronic information about the check includes an indicator that indicates the presence of an auxiliary on-us field on a magnetic ink character recognition (MICR) associated with the check wherein the presence of the auxiliary on-us field denotes that the check is a corporate check;

in response to determining the check includes the indicator, determining whether the subscribing merchant is allowed to process corporate checks electronically based on the merchant's status; and

in response to determining the merchant is allowed to process corporate checks electronically, performing a risk assessment for the corporate check based at least in part on the electronic information to thereby authorize or decline the corporate check.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein subsequent electronic processing of the corporate check proceeds if the subscribing merchant is allowed to process corporate checks electronically.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein determining the subscribing merchant's status is facilitated by a merchant setup system having a profile of the subscribing merchant wherein the profile includes data that determines how check transactions associated with the subscribing merchant are to be processed.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising processing the electronic information about the corporate check as a cash concentration disbursement (CCD) transaction via an automated clearing house (ACH) upon authorization of the corporate check.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein performing the risk assessment comprises determining a risk score based on factors associated with the check.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the risk assessment depends at least to some degree on a level of service subscribed by the merchant.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the level of service includes guaranteeing the authorized check or purchasing the check from the subscribing merchant thereby assuming at least some of the risk associated with, the check.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic information about the check is obtained by an electronic device associated with the subscribing merchant.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the electronic device associated with the subscribing merchant comprises a check scanner adapted to capture an image of at least a portion of the check wherein the check scanner is further adapted to read the check's MICR.

10. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the electronic device associated with the subscribing merchant comprises a computer adapted to receive inputs associated with processing of the corporate check.

11. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the electronic device associated with the subscribing merchant comprises a telephone based device adapted to perform a telephone based financial transaction.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising obtaining and retaining an image of at least a portion of the check upon determination that the check is a corporate check.

13. (Currently Amended) A system for authorizing electronic processing of a corporate check received at a merchant location, the system comprising:

a receiving component that receives an electronic information about a check from a subscribing merchant;

a processor that determines whether the electronic information about the check includes an indicator that indicates the presence of an auxiliary on-us field on a magnetic ink character recognition (MICR) associated with the check wherein the presence of the auxiliary on-us field denotes that the check is a corporate check;

a merchant database that facilitates determination of whether the subscribing merchant is allowed to process corporate checks electronically based on the merchant's status; and

a risk assessment component that assesses risk associated with the corporate check based at least in part on the electronic information to thereby authorize or decline the corporate check if the subscribing merchant is allowed to process corporate checks electronically.

14. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 13, wherein subsequent electronic processing of the corporate check proceeds if the subscribing merchant is allowed to process corporate checks electronically.

15. (Original) The system of claim 14, wherein the merchant database comprises a merchant setup system having a profile of the subscribing merchant wherein the profile includes data that determines how check transactions associated with the subscribing merchant are to be processed.

16. (Original) The system of claim 13, wherein the system processes the electronic information about the corporate check as a cash concentration disbursement (CCD) transaction via an automated clearing house (ACH) upon authorization of the corporate check.

17. (Original) The system of claim 13, wherein the risk assessment component determines a risk score based on factors associated with the check.

18. (Original) The system of claim 13, wherein the risk assessment depends at least to some degree on a level of service subscribed by the merchant.

19. (Original) The system of claim 18, wherein the level of service includes guaranteeing the authorized check or purchasing the check from the subscribing merchant thereby assuming at least some of the risk associated with the check.

20. (Original) The system of claim 13, wherein the electronic information about the check is obtained by an electronic device associated with the subscribing merchant.

21. (Original) The system of claim 20, wherein the electronic device associated with the subscribing merchant comprises a check scanner adapted to capture an image of at least a portion of the check wherein the check scanner is further adapted to read the check's MICR.

22. (Original) The system of claim 20, wherein the electronic device associated with the subscribing merchant comprises a computer adapted to receive inputs associated with processing of the corporate check.

23. (Original) The system of claim 20, wherein the electronic device associated with the subscribing merchant comprises a telephone based device adapted to perform a telephone based financial transaction.

24. (Original) The system of claim 13, wherein the processor further induces obtaining and retaining of an image of at least a portion of the check upon determination that the check is a corporate check.

25. (Currently Amended) A method of authorizing a check transaction involving a subscribing merchant, the method comprising:

receiving information about the check transaction from the subscribing merchant wherein the information about the check transaction allows at least a portion of subsequent processing of the check transaction to be performed electronically;

determining whether the information about the check transaction includes an indicator that indicates that the check transaction involves a corporate check;

determining whether the subscribing merchant is allowed to process corporate checks based on the merchant's status; and

in response to determining the subscribing merchant is allowed to process corporate checks, determining whether to authorize or decline the check transaction as a corporate check transaction based on the presence of the indicator and the information about the check transaction.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein receiving information comprises receiving electronic information about the check transaction.

27. (Original) The method of claim 26, wherein the indicator indicates the presence of an auxiliary on-us field on a magnetic ink character recognition (MICR) information associated with the check transaction.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein subsequent electronic processing of the corporate check proceeds if the subscribing merchant is allowed to process corporate checks.

29. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein determining the subscribing merchant's status is facilitated by a merchant setup system having a profile of the subscribing merchant wherein the profile includes data that determines how check transactions associated with the subscribing merchant are to be processed.

30. (Original) The method of claim 25, further comprising processing the check transaction as a cash concentration disbursement (CCD) transaction via an automated clearing house (ACH) upon authorization of the corporate check.

31. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein determining whether to authorize or decline the check transaction comprises performing a risk assessment of the check transaction.

32. (Original) The method of claim 31, wherein performing the risk assessment comprises determining a risk score based on factors associated with the check transaction.

33. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein determining whether to authorize or decline the check transaction depends at least to some degree on a level of service subscribed by the merchant.

34. (Original) The method of claim 33, wherein the level of service includes guaranteeing the authorized check or purchasing the check from the subscribing merchant thereby assuming at least some of the risk associated with the check.

35. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein the information about the check transaction is obtained by an electronic device associated with the subscribing merchant.

36. (Original) The method of claim 35, wherein the electronic device associated with the subscribing merchant comprises a check scanner adapted to capture an image of at least a portion of the check wherein the check scanner is further adapted to read the check's MICR.

37. (Original) The method of claim 35, wherein the electronic device associated with the subscribing merchant comprises a computer adapted to receive, inputs associated with processing of the corporate check.

38. (Original) The method of claim 35, wherein the electronic device associated with the subscribing merchant comprises a telephone based device adapted to perform a telephone based financial transaction.

39. (Original) The method of claim 25, further comprising obtaining and retaining an image of at least a portion of a check associated with the check transaction upon determination that the check transaction is a corporate check transaction.

40. (Currently Amended) A method of authorizing a financial transaction involving a merchant, comprising:

receiving information about the financial transaction from the merchant wherein the information allows at least a portion of subsequent processing of the financial transaction to be performed electronically;

determining whether the merchant is allowed to conduct corporate type transactions based on the merchant's status; and

in response to determining the merchant is allowed to conduct corporate type transactions, determining whether to authorize the financial transaction as a corporate type transaction based at least on whether the information includes an indicator that indicates that the financial transaction is a corporate type transaction.

41. (Original) The method of claim 40, wherein the financial transaction comprises a check transaction.

42. (Original) The method of claim 41, wherein the information about the financial transaction includes a magnetic ink character recognition (MICR) information associated with the check transaction.

43. (Original) The method of claim 42, wherein the indicator associated with the information comprises an auxiliary on-us field associated with the MICR information.

44. (Original) The method of claim 43, wherein the check transaction is treated a corporate type transaction if the auxiliary on-us field is part of the MICR information.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 40, wherein subsequent electronic processing of the corporate type transaction proceeds if the merchant is allowed to conduct corporate type transactions.

46. (Original) The method of claim 45, wherein determining the merchant's status is facilitated by a merchant setup system having a profile of the merchant wherein the profile includes data that determines how financial transactions associated with the merchant are to be conducted.

47. (Original) The method of claim 40, further comprising processing the financial transaction as a cash concentration disbursement (CCD) transaction via an automated clearing house (ACH) upon authorization of the corporate type transaction.

48. (Original) The method of claim 40, wherein determining whether to authorize the financial transaction comprises performing a risk assessment of the financial transaction.

49. (Original) The method of claim 48, wherein performing the risk assessment comprises determining a risk score based on factors associated with the financial transaction.

50. (Original) The method of claim 40, wherein determining whether to authorize the financial transaction depends at least to some degree on a level of service subscribed by the merchant.

51. (Original) The method of claim 50, wherein the level of service includes guaranteeing the authorized financial transaction or purchasing the financial transaction from the merchant thereby assuming at least some of the risk associated with the financial transaction.

52. (Original) The method of claim 40, wherein the information from the merchant is obtained by an electronic device associated with the merchant.

53. (Original) The method of claim 52, wherein the electronic device comprises a check scanner adapted to capture an image of at least a portion of the check wherein the check scanner is further adapted to read the check's MICR.

54. (Original) The method of claim 52, wherein the electronic device comprises a computer adapted to receive inputs associated with a computer based financial transaction.

55. (Original) The method of claim 52, wherein the electronic device comprises a telephone based device adapted to perform a telephone based financial transaction.

56. (Original) The method of claim 40, further comprising obtaining and retaining an image of at least a portion of a check for financial transactions involving checks upon determination that the financial transaction is a corporate type.

57. (Currently Amended) A system for authorizing a financial transaction involving a merchant, comprising:

a receiving component that receives information about the financial transaction from the merchant wherein the information allows at least a portion of subsequent processing of the financial transaction to be performed electronically; and

a processor that determines whether the merchant is allowed to conduct corporate type transactions based on the merchant's status and determines whether to authorize the financial transaction as a corporate type transaction based at least on whether the information includes an indicator that indicates that the financial transaction is a corporate type transaction.

58. (Original) The system of claim 57, wherein the financial transaction comprises a check transaction.

59. (Original) The system of claim 58, wherein the information about the financial transaction includes a magnetic ink character recognition (MICR) information associated with the check transaction.

60. (Original) The system of claim 59, wherein the indicator associated with the information comprises an auxiliary on-us field associated with the MICR information.

61. (Original) The system of claim 60, wherein the check transaction is a treated as a corporate type transaction if the auxiliary on-us field is part of the MICR information.

62. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 57, wherein subsequent electronic processing of the corporate type transaction proceeds if the merchant is allowed to conduct corporate type transactions.

63. (Original) The system of claim 62, wherein the processor's determination of the merchant's status is facilitated by a merchant setup system having a profile of the merchant wherein the profile includes data that determines how financial transactions associated with the merchant are to be conducted.

64. (Original) The system of claim 57, wherein the processor induces subsequent processing of the financial transaction as a cash concentration disbursement (CCD) transaction via an automated clearing house (ACH) upon authorization of the corporate type transaction.

65. (Original) The system of claim 57, wherein the processor is configured to perform or induce performance of a risk assessment to facilitate the authorization of the financial transaction.

66. (Original) The system of claim 65, wherein the risk assessment comprises determination of a risk score based on factors associated with the financial transaction.

67. (Original) The system of claim 57, wherein the processor's determination of whether to authorize the financial transaction depends at least to some degree on a level of service subscribed by the merchant.

68. (Original) The system of claim 67, wherein the level of service includes guaranteeing the authorized financial transaction or purchasing the financial transaction from the merchant thereby assuming at least some of the risk associated with the financial transaction.

69. (Original) The system of claim 57, wherein the information from the merchant is obtained by an electronic device associated with the merchant.

70. (Original) The system of claim 69, wherein the electronic device comprises a check scanner adapted to capture an image of at least a portion of the check wherein the check scanner is further adapted to read the check's MICR.

71. (Original) The system of claim 69, wherein the electronic device comprises a computer adapted to receive inputs associated with a computer based financial transaction.

72. (Original) The system of claim 69, wherein the electronic device comprises a telephone based device adapted to perform a telephone based financial transaction.

73. (Original) The system of claim 57, wherein the processor induces obtaining and retaining of at least a portion of a check for financial transactions involving checks upon determination that the financial transaction is a corporate type.

74. (Currently Amended) A system for authorizing a financial transaction involving a merchant, comprising:
a first means for receiving information about the financial transaction from the merchant; and

a second means for determining whether the merchant is allowed to conduct corporate type transactions based on the merchant's status and, in response to determining the merchant is allowed to conduct corporate type transactions, authorizing the financial transaction as a corporate type transaction based at least on the information about the financial transaction.

75. (Original) The system of claim 74, wherein the financial transaction is treated as a corporate type transaction if the information about the financial transaction includes an indicator.

76. (Original) The system of claim 75, wherein the first means comprises receiving electronic information about a check transaction.

77. (Original) The system of claim 76, wherein the electronic information about the check transaction includes a magnetic ink character recognition (MICR) information.

78. (Original) The system of claim 77, wherein the indicator comprises an auxiliary on-us field that is part of the MICR information for a corporate check transaction.

79. (Canceled)

80. (Original) The system of claim 74, further comprising a third means for processing financial transaction electronically upon its authorization.

81. (Original) The system of claim 80, wherein the third means comprises processing the financial transaction electronically as a cash concentration disbursement (CCD) transaction via an automated clearing house (ACH).

82. (Original) The system of claim 74, wherein the second means includes performing a risk assessment of the financial transaction.

83. (Original) The system of claim 74, wherein the second means includes determining a level of financial transaction processing service subscribed by the merchant.

84. (Original) The system of claim 83, wherein the level of financial transaction processing service includes guaranteeing the authorized financial transaction or purchasing the financial transaction from the merchant thereby assuming at least some of the risk associated with the financial transaction.

85. (Original) The system of claim 74, wherein the first means comprises receiving the information from an electronic device associated with the merchant.

86. (Original) The system of claim 74, wherein the first means further comprises obtaining and retaining an image of at least a portion of a check for financial transactions involving checks upon determination that the financial transaction is a corporate type.